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FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Oxygen Generators New Lifesavers for Gaza

GAZA CITY – The Palestinian health care system took a giant step toward achieving greater self-sufficiency Wednesday with the delivery of four oxygen generators to Gaza hospitals.

The vital oxygen generators are gifts from the American people.

The generators were purchased by the U.S., Agency for International Development (USAID) for installation in the 664-bed Nasser Hospital in Khan Younis, the 40-bed Beit Hanoun Hospital in North Gaza, the 90-bed Dura Hospital in Gaza City and the 50-bed Tel El Sultan Hospital in Rafah.

Those hospitals serve hundreds of patients each month. The new generators will go a long way toward alleviating the problems caused by an unreliable supply of oxygen cylinders.

The generators extract and concentrate oxygen from the ambient air, providing a readily available supply at each of the four hospitals.

This unique initiative, which will help save the lives of Palestinians patients who require supplemental oxygen, cost \$510,000 including \$465,000 for the oxygen generators and \$45,000 to construct special rooms for the machinery.

Oxygen is vital for the adequate provision of emergency care provision, particularly during surgery, and most hospitals are dependent on oxygen cylinders.

But, the transport of oxygen cylinders in Gaza has often been difficult, mainly because it is extremely dangerous to transport compressed gases through a conflict zone. USAID, therefore, decided to purchase oxygen generators to give health facilities within the Gaza Strip a more reliable supply of supplemental oxygen.



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The delivery of oxygen generators also augurs a new stage in USAID's medical assistance program for Palestinians. During the Intifada, USAID concentrated on responding to emergency needs, on helping maintain essential support services and on mitigating the impact of the conflict on the health and well-being of Palestinians.

Today, USAID is looking at long term development and is working to strengthen the healthcare sector in the West Bank and Gaza by supporting a transition to a more autonomous medical system.

The American people have spent more than \$1.5 billion in the West Bank and Gaza to combat poverty, create jobs, improve education, build roads and water systems, construct and equip medical clinics, and promote good governance.